

The American Teacher

Democracy in Education; Education for Democracy.

VOL. II No. 9

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WARNING

There is danger in the ease with which you fall into routine.

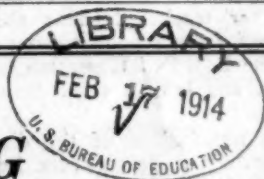
There is danger in the pigeon-holes for sorting boys and girls.

There is danger in last year's plan-book that worked so well.

There is danger in the discipline that works like a machine.

There is danger in knowing your subject so well that you never have to prepare your lessons.

There is danger in perfection; when you have reached that look about for a new field.



THE MARRIED WOMAN AS A TEACHER

IN THE April number of THE AMERICAN TEACHER reference was made to the refusal of the Board of Education of New York City to grant a teacher leave of absence for the purpose of bearing and nursing a child. Since then the status of the mother as teacher has been made an issue by the preferring of charges for "neglect of duty" against another teacher because she absented herself from school without permission of the Board of Education or its President, and bore a child during her absence.

In anticipation of the discussion on the motion to dismiss Mrs. Peixotto, Dr. Ira S. Wile, a member of the Board of Education, wrote to the chief educational officers of the various states, asking for information on the position and work of married teachers. Replies to most of the questions were received from forty-two states and the results are presented below.¹

I

Has the State Department of Education made any rulings upon the status of married teachers who become mothers?

The answers from nine states declare specifically that there are no laws discriminating against the employment of married women.² But in none of the states has the State Department of Education made a ruling on the subject. Local school boards have adopted regulations excluding married teachers from the schools in Missouri (St. Louis), Louisiana (New Orleans), Vermont (Barre and Burlington) and Tennessee. In Maryland the boards generally adhere to the precedent of employing no married teacher unless her husband is an invalid. In Utah and in Kansas a mar-

ried teacher may not be employed, and in the latter state the marriage of a teacher after employment is considered equivalent to a resignation.

II

Are there any legal decisions in your state, enabling or forbidding the Board of Education to dismiss a married teacher for neglect of duty because of maternity?

To this question there is no reply from Massachusetts and North Dakota. In the other states there has been no legal decision on the subject. In South Carolina dismissal of all teachers is made discretionary by statute. In Wisconsin "there is nothing in the law that would prevent a school board from dismissing a teacher for failure to satisfactorily fulfill the terms of the contract entered into between the teacher and the school board." But in that state there is nothing in the law to prevent a board from "refusing to contract with or employ a married teacher."

III

What has been the experience of your state with married women as teachers?

From eight states³ there are no answers to this question, and those from some of the other states are ambiguous.

In seven states the experience has been "favorable" or "satisfactory."⁴ Michigan and Nebraska report that married teachers are just as good as others; and Maine finds no inherent objection to them, while Iowa says it "depends on the person." California, Oklahoma and Texas have not yet had any trouble or complaint on account of married teachers, and in Rhode Island "they are still in good repute as teachers." In that

¹ No replies were received from Delaware, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Wyoming.

² Arkansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Utah, Vermont and Wisconsin.

³ Arkansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Missouri, New Mexico, Oregon, South Dakota and Washington.

⁴ Alabama, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Nevada, New Hampshire.

State each teacher "is judged by her services, whether married or single."

Several states report that they employ very few married teachers; but in Oregon and Montana the issue has never been raised. Of all the states reporting, Kentucky is the only one that is dissatisfied, for there the experience with married teachers has been "not altogether satisfactory," presumably in comparison with unmarried teachers. In that State "some of the City Boards have made rulings as to married women."

The New Hampshire report contains this comment:

I believe that married women in general are quite as efficient as unmarried women, and in many cases the fact that they have children of their own enables them to understand pupils better.

Many of the answers to this question show that the State Superintendents interpreted "what experience" in a qualitative sense, while others took it in a quantitative sense, so that there is a partial overlapping of the next question.

IV

Are married [women] teachers less efficient than unmarried women teachers?

Twenty-two of the states give no answer to this question, omitting it entirely or stating that they have little or no experience upon which to base conclusions. Of the other twenty, twelve⁶ answer with an unqualified, "No!" and six say "no" as a matter of judgment or qualify in some other way. Thus Iowa, "No, when not responsible for household duties."

The two answers that are unfavorable are those from South Carolina, "Commonly so, except in rare cases"; and from Montana, "I do not see how a married woman can attend to the duties of her family and the school at the same time." This is not the place to explain that much of the dish-washing and voting can very well be done at hours that do not interfere with school

work; but the comments of New Hampshire and Rhode Island about offset the fears of Montana: "I have never been able to see that efficiency has any particular relation to the married or unmarried condition" and "Efficiency depends upon personality, not on marriage or single blessedness."

V

What has been your experience with married teachers who have become mothers?

Because of lack of experience or of information in most states, only twelve give definite answers to this question. Of these, Kansas, as explained under I, makes marriage equivalent to resignation; and Montana's experience with married teachers has "not been satisfactory." Iowa does "not believe [that] a teacher should be burdened with household duties"; and in two states (Alabama and New Hampshire) the situation is met by the temporary withdrawal of the teacher-mother. Seven states of the twelve reporting find the mothers satisfactory or better⁶, and the experience of Rhode Island is equivocal: "Some are better teachers, others are distracted by home duties. There is no general rule."

VI

Do they [married teachers who become mothers] become less efficient and are they absent more than other teachers in the system?

Only sixteen answers are given to this question—of these nine are favorable to the mothers.⁷ In Florida a temporary withdrawal from service is the remedy used for reducing inefficiency

⁶ California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia ("that they are good teachers"), Kentucky ("except in a few cases"), Michigan ("not less efficient than others") and Oregon ("The experience has broadened their sympathies and understanding of children; it has not made them less capable.").

⁷ Alabama, California, Georgia ("but absent more"), Idaho, Iowa ("when not responsible for household duties"), Kentucky (with "exceptional cases"), New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Rhode Island.

⁸ Alabama, California, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, Michigan, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, Oregon, Rhode Island.

due to the cause specified. In Oregon a teacher would "not be permitted" to reduce her efficiency or increase her absences, presumably for *any* cause. In Wisconsin the courts have held, if we read the answer correctly, that the dismissal of a teacher for "incompetency under the circumstances is a breach of contract, and that the local authorities are liable for the full amount of the teacher's wages. Ambiguous replies come from Louisiana, which finds some of its mother teachers among the best and some among the poorest; from Michigan, which does not *believe* that the mothers are less efficient or absent more than others; and from Nebraska, where no difference is noticeable.

VII

Is absence, due to pregnancy or parturition, excused—with or without pay?

Fifteen replies were received to this answer. In nine of the fifteen states the teacher could retire without pay for the necessary length of time.

In only one state are the authorities sufficiently far-sighted to be compared with those of France, Russia and Serbia; in West Virginia the mother teacher is *excused with pay*.

In Georgia and Iowa teachers under such circumstances are supposed to resign; at any rate they are not excused in the former state. In Idaho such matters are settled by the local authorities; and in Michigan no discrimination is made against the married teacher. In New Hampshire each "case would be dealt with on its own merits."

⁸ Alabama, Arizona, California, Florida, Kentucky, Nebraska, Oregon, Rhode Island, and possibly South Carolina, the answer for that state being ambiguous.

DEMOCRACY IN THE SWISS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

A. KOVAR

Elementary Schools, New York City

AT THIS moment there is a distinct and ever-growing feeling among the teachers of our country that the schools, the bulwark of our democracy, are not organized and directed along democratic lines. More and more is the teaching profession, everywhere, and particularly in the large cities, becoming alive to the fact that if the great stream of childhood which is constantly flowing through the schools is to be educated to a healthy and vigorous citizenship in this great republic, then our schools themselves must be made to undergo a marked transformation. They must emerge from the military, autocratic, and bureaucratic regime under which for so many years they have been marking time, and become both in their ideals and practical operation a true expression of our democratic institutions and our social aspirations. It has been said that every people has that form of government to which it is entitled in accordance with its intellectual progress and spiritual development. True as this law is in the field of political

science, it is even more profoundly true, although but little recognized, in matters educational. The plain fact which is slowly beginning to lay hold upon the minds of the teachers and the public at large, is this:—that our schools in their ideals, organization, method of administration and pedagogical well-being are fully a century behind our social and political progress.

As the result of a long chain of conditions and fortuitous circumstances which it is not the present purpose to analyze, we are now face to face with the startling fact that what the public schools were meant to do, namely, to educate the young generation for efficient citizenship in the economic, social and political life of a democracy, and what they actually do, are two different things. There is a lamentable lack of articulation between the school and life, between the needs of the community and the attempts made by our system of education to satisfy those needs.

In view of these facts it may be illuminating and somewhat heartening to glance at our small but vigorous sister republic, Switzerland, and observe how she with material resources infinitely less than ours has grappled with the problem of democratic education.

In a monograph by R. L. Morant, in Vol. 3, of Special Reports on Education issued by the Education Department of Great Britain, it is shown that the two fundamental features of the Swiss Schools are these. First, that the entire educational system is so organized as to allow the people of each Canton and each Commune to retain the control of the schools in their own hands. And second, that the teachers, themselves, wield a large responsibility both in the administrative and pedagogical direction of public education.

An outline sketch of the educational system of Zurich, typical of the greater number of Swiss Cantons, will help to make the statements clear.

There is, in the first place, an Erziehungs Director, who is one of the Cantonal Executive Council of seven. To him is attached an Educational Council consisting of six members, of which the Herr Director is the ex-officio President. Four of these six members are nominated by the Cantonal Council of State, while the other two are selected by the whole profession of teachers of the Canton, one representing the elementary schools, and one the secondary schools and university teachers. Their term of office is three years, renewable. To this Erziehungsrath, as it is called, is committed the direction and supervision of the whole school organization of the Canton. Each Canton is then divided into a number of school districts each of which has a District Education Authority made up of nine to thirteen members, three of whom are chosen by the whole teaching body of the district, the rest by the non-teaching residents. This provincial authority has the entire oversight of the whole school organization included in its area. The members of this district organization divide among themselves the visitation of all the schools under their

control and look after all the details concerning the good conduct of the schools. These districts are again sub-divided into school circles each presided over by a local authority, the membership of which is proportioned in accordance with the population. And finally, each of these school circles is composed of a number of Communes, each with its own Communal School Authority, elected by the inhabitants of the area which it controls.

It is evident from this brief sketch, that the teachers exercise a good deal of control over the educational organization of each Canton and that the people themselves are in close touch with the schools of their immediate neighborhood. In each of the two higher authorities, namely the Erziehungs Rath and the District Education Authority, the teachers are represented to the extent of almost one-third, while in the lower two and more local educational directive bodies the people are in absolute control. We thus have the principle of democracy actually operating in the educational policy and organization of the Swiss Republic, as it does in its political and social life. To quote the author of the monograph mentioned above, "Switzerland offers a striking proof of the fact, that the necessary quantum of central control over local freedom so necessary to the maintenance of a high level of educational effort can quite well prevail concurrently with the truest democratic development.

In the Canton of Bern where the educational organization is more centralized than in Zurich, it still remains true that the teaching body as such wields a distinct power over the schools of their Canton. It is accomplished through the medium of an *officially recognised* Teachers' Council in which members of all branches of the profession are represented, and which is invariably consulted before any important change in the educational policies of the Canton are undertaken. This Teachers' Council acts as a counter balance to the Central Authority by presenting to the department its opinion gained from practical experience in the classroom upon any

question that might arise, and by "initiating discussion of new possibilities and bringing them into official consideration." Therefore, whatever danger there might be that the Central control would result in stereotyped uniformity and atrophy of individual experiment and initiative in a dry-rot bureaucracy, is dissipated by the active part played by the Teachers' Council.

We thus find that the Swiss educational system is subject to a dual control. One arising, as Mr. Morant puts it, "from the freedom of individual initiative and local effort essential to a free democracy, the other from the guidance of an aristocracy of brains—picked men of educational as well as of administrative knowledge, wisdom and experience chosen as such by the democracy for this express purpose."

If we now turn to our own school system and place it side by side with that of Switzerland, what do we find? Just this: that it suffers from a lack of the very things that make the Swiss schools so successful. And they are, first, an active

participation of the teaching force in the management of the schools; second, such elasticity and flexibility in educational policies as will permit adaptation to the needs of the community. Here we are weighed down by an educational structure which has for its foundation and cornerstone — "centralization." Every possible improvement, every possible advantage that might accrue from a relative freedom, a personal responsibility upon the part of the teachers themselves, are sacrificed to the idols of uniformity, conformity, and lock-step perfection. The teachers are "subordinates," and must have the only virtue of subordinates, which is obedience. To think, to experiment, to originate—that is treason. The ideal held up to the teaching force by their superiors is that of a well-drilled, perfectly disciplined army. Is it any wonder that under such conditions teaching is a "trade" and a thankless one at that, instead of being the noble and inspiring profession that it should be?

NEW EVILS OF PART TIME

S. E. B.

IN ORDER to reduce the so-called part-time evil the Board of Education of the City of New York recently adopted the following plan:

(I) That for pupils of the first year grades a school day providing four hours' instruction be considered full time and reported as such;

(II) That wherever possible, a double-system plan providing five hours' instruction daily, be established in congested schools not relieved by recommendation (I).

The "double system" time plan is:

Section A: Morning Session—

8:30 to 11:30

8:30 to 10:30 Classroom.

10:30 to 11:30 "Opening" exercises and study in auditoriums or playgrounds.

11:30 to 12:30 Recess.

Afternoon Session—

12:30 to 2:30 Classroom.

Section B: Morning Session—

9:30 to 12:30

9:30 to 10:30 "Opening" exercises and study in auditoriums or playgrounds.

10:30 to 12:30 Classroom.

12:30 to 2:30 Recess.

2:30 to 4:30 Classroom.

A critical examination of this plan leads us to the following observations:

RECOMMENDATION I

The reduction of the school day in the first year from five to four hours is defended by the committee that drew up the plan, as follows:

"If a three-hour school day is sufficient for a child while he is in the kindergarten, what possible physical or physiological change can warrant the demand for a five-hour school day when he is promoted

to the 1A grade? If a three-hour school day founded on the play instincts and needs of the child is considered sufficiently long while he is a member of the kindergarten class, is not a five-hour school day too long for the same child when he becomes a member of the first-year grade with its more formal instruction and more rigid discipline?"

Precisely for the reason that the transition from the kindergarten to the first grade is so marked should we hesitate before we curtail the five-hour school day? If the school day is shortened, the chances are that all the time will be consumed in formal study, and not enough time will be given to play and recreation to which the child was accustomed in his kindergarten days.

However, if a four-hour school day will reduce part time, the sensible thing to do would be to establish a four-hour school day in the first year, and if feasible even in the second. But enough time for play and recreation must be provided.

RECOMMENDATION II.

It is claimed that this plan will not only reduce part time but also that the children will not lose any time from the traditional five-hour school day. At first glance the scheme appears to be excellent. Upon closer study, however, we observe some features which show this plan to be of doubtful value.

1. In the first place, it violates all principles of personal and school hygiene. Children in Section B spend the first hour of the school day in "Opening exercises and study in auditoriums or playgrounds." That is, one, two, three, and more classes, carrying clothing and books, come into the auditorium or playground directly from the street. If the auditorium is the place of study, they occupy seats built for adults. They breathe foul air and read and write in cramped positions by poor, artificial light. They have no desks to write upon, nor have they racks upon which to hang their clothing. In rainy weather the children are not only uncomfortable but their health is actually imperiled. Several classes and teachers in one room nat-

urally produce a state of affairs that is not entirely conducive to intensive study. An additional source of disturbance is the playing, during recess periods, of lower grade children in the vicinity of the auditorium.

If the place of study happens to be the playground instead of the auditorium the situation is still more serious. Here the children are forced to stand or to sit very close together on benches (in some cases they must sit on the floor) holding their books and clothing in their laps.

That these conditions are not over-stated is proved by the committee itself:

Having two teachers in a classroom sometimes leads to a clash of authority and a failure to coöperate in the details of the program.

* * * pupils are frequently obliged to occupy accommodations that are not suited to them. * * * Another objection is that pupils are obliged to carry their materials with them and are not able to work as satisfactorily as if they had a fixed abode.

Few assembly rooms have adequate equipment for proper class instruction. The lighting and ventilation are usually unsatisfactory. The difficulty of having to work for several hours amid distracting noises of other classes certainly interferes with progress. It is a strain to teach in assembly rooms not intended for classroom purposes. The ceilings are usually too high. Fitting these rooms with curtains or movable partitions does not improve matters.

These are the facts. What is the character of the work that can be done under such conditions? Have we been talking "standards" only for the sake of hearing ourselves talk? Is the experience of child study experts, competent teachers, and wise superintendents to be cast to the winds?

Listen again to the committee that proposed this new part-time plan:

If these (approved) conditions are necessary to the physical, mental, and moral well-being of the child, then any lowering of the standard is an invasion of his rights, and is to be deplored. The schoolhouse is not merely a place for housing children, but for housing them so that they can get the full benefit from the instruction provided.

Why, then, make recommendations that violate these standards?

Not only a seat, but a seat and a desk for every child—that is the issue that ought to be taken up.

In many old and in most new school buildings the auditorium is located on the ground floor, or lower. The seventh and eighth year classes are invariably found on the upper floors—in some buildings on the fifth. Pupils and teachers are subjected to the additional strain and discomfort of climbing four and five flights of stairs in order to “camp” for a short while in a temporary abode. When you remember that books and clothing have to be carried along, this kind of exercise is not physical culture—it is truly physical torture.

2. According to schedule, Section B has a recess (lunch hour) of two hours—12:30 to 2:30. Has it occurred to anyone to ask what an active seventh or eighth grade boy will do with so much spare time on his hands? Surely the claim that this plan will keep boys “off the streets” must be seriously questioned.

3. Again according to schedule, Section B goes home at 4:30 p. m.—one and one-half hours after the usual dismissal time. In the districts where part time is most prevalent many of the boys and girls over fourteen years of age are engaged in gainful occupations of some sort after school hours. The extra hour and a half in school will thus effectually decrease the family income. By what process of reasoning can we justify such a transgression upon the needy ones?

4. Another violation that must be charged to this plan is the invasion of the home routine and an unnecessary call for waste of time and energy. In localities where part time is the rule rather than the exception, it is not uncommon to find three or more children of one family in the same school. Now, it is not altogether inconceivable that one of these children is in Section A, the second in Section B, and the third on full time. This means additional drain on the energies of the already overworked mother. Instead of having a family lunch hour between 12 and 1 p. m., the lunch period is now extended over a period of about three hours. The labor of cooking, serv-

ing, spreading tables, washing dishes, etc., is trebled.

5. Lack of permanent abode for teaching and learning purposes is another great fault of this scheme. Decoration of the room which reflects the personality of the teacher and awakens a permanent interest in the children is out of the question. To carry illustrative material and objective illustrations from place to place is a task that was never intended for intelligent teachers. Here again the committee forestalls criticism:

The teacher is entitled to the exclusive possession of a classroom which she may decorate according to her taste and in the decoration of which her pupils will naturally take part and pride.

Again the query arises: Why make a recommendation that is at cross purposes with accepted principles?

6. No slight objection to this plan is the fact that the teachers of Section B are compelled to work one hour a day more than the Section A teachers or the full time teachers. These teachers begin work at 9:30 a. m. and do not stop until 4:30 p. m.—a working period of seven hours instead of the present six. By what right or authority can any one demand one extra hour of work daily from any set or group of teachers? Has the committee proved that teachers are suffering from a lack of hard work? Truly, this is an insult to the intelligence of the teachers and a shameful imposition upon their rights as workers and citizens. What other body of workers—lay or professional—would tolerate such high-handed procedure?

7. The last, tho by no means the least, objection we have to this plan is the fact that at no stage of the deliberations—initial or final—was the experience of the 20,000 teachers officially utilized. At the instance of the President of the Board of Education, three superintendents (no teachers or principals, who come in constant contact with the children and their work) set to work to abolish part time. The result is a plan that meets neither the needs of pupils nor the approval of teachers or parents.

(Continued on page 142)

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This paper seeks to advance the status of the teacher to the dignity and the influence of a profession, by advocating high standards of admission to the calling; by urging an extension of the opportunities for the participation of teachers in the direction of educational affairs; and by supporting the organization of teachers for all legitimate professional purposes.

DODGING ISSUES

IT is an evidence of low mental development to suspect our adversaries of stupidity or insincerity. We must believe that those whose views differ from ours are just as sincere as we are; and we must try to enlighten them if their

erroneous views are based on ignorance. By the same token, we must try to understand why they think as they do, for there is always the possibility that we ourselves are in the wrong.

In the matter of the married teacher it is easy to see why honest people hold divergent views. But the action of the New York City Board of Education, after voting to dismiss Mrs. Peixotto from the public service, is hard to understand.

It was made plain in the course of the discussion that the lady was *not* being dismissed for bearing a child without permission of the Board of Education or of its President; she was dismissed, according to law and precedent, for "neglect of duty" inasmuch as it was proven that she was absent from school without permission. Very well.

After the vote was recorded one of the Commissioners moved that the Superintendent be directed to prefer charges against all teachers whose cases were "similar to that of Mrs. Peixotto." Another Commissioner thought this motion superfluous, since under the by-laws it is the duty of the Superintendent to prefer charges against all teachers who are suspected of "neglect of duty." A third Commissioner was in sympathy with the purpose of the motion, but feared that the wording was not sufficiently definite, since each case might have distinctive features, and there might not be another one *exactly* similar to that just disposed of. Then Commissioner Wile arose and said, "All right then, let us be honest about it. I offer as a substitute or as an amendment, that 'the Superintendent be directed to prefer charges of neglect of duty against all teachers who have absented themselves for the purpose of child-bearing.'"

Did the Board accept Dr. Wile's invitation to be honest? It did not. It rejected his amendment and voted the original motion. No doubt they were sincere in doing so; but some things are hard to understand.

Must we choose between stupid honesty and brilliant rascality?

TWEEDLEDUM

IN OUR editorial last month, "Bosses and Bosses," we allowed our readers to get the impression that in adopting resolutions reprimanding the City Superintendent, the Board of Education of New York City somehow trenched upon the right of free speech.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. The President of the Board has publicly called attention to the fact that free speech was not at issue, and to the fact that he is himself a staunch advocate of free speech. When he gave members of the teaching staff permission to go to the state capitol and speak on behalf of the "McKee bills," he was encouraging free speech. When he reprimanded a school principal for speaking against the "McKee bills" he was again supporting free speech—he was solicitous lest the teachers to whom the Principal spoke might fear to speak back.

In the present instance, the letter of the President to the City Superintendent and the resolution of the Board merely affirmed the principle that an employee of the Board should *not participate in an unauthorized conference on school matters*.

THE SCHOOL COUNCIL IDEA

IF THE Teachers' League of New York does nothing more than continue its advocacy of the "School Council" idea, it will make a permanent impress on the New York educational system and on other systems similarly organized. The School Council is a committee of three, five or seven teachers elected by the teachers of the school to work with the principal in formulating the problems of the school and in endeavoring to solve them. No scheme of coöperation has been suggested for large schools that holds greater promise of beneficial results than does the school council plan.

At the October 17th meeting of the Teachers' League, Dr. Ira S. Wile, Member of the Board of Education, admitted

the probability of the usefulness of the plan, and declared that there is no legal or administrative reason why it could not be generally adopted.

The Boys High School of Brooklyn has a School Council already in working order. Other New York City schools are seriously considering the adoption of this democratic idea.

ON THE TREAD MILL

WALKING UP the incline, day after day, month after month, year after year, you get very weary and footsore. And your brain gets tired, too, and hardened; and your spirit droops and becomes sullen. That is why you stay on the tread. You stop now and then and wait for the driver to slip in a new tread, for in time you wear out the old ones. Then the driver wears out, for driving is even harder than walking the tread, but the man higher up puts in a new driver. Then you wear out, but the grinding goes on and on forever. There are other beasts where you came from.

But one day will come a beast that will carry the heritage of his unbridled ancestors. He will not tread the mill, but will crush it with his powerful feet. And then all the beasts that are left will scream for joy that one has come with more spirit than the mill had crushed in them.

And when the mill is destroyed, some wise observer of the race of man will discover that the mill had been used to grind out the souls of his own kind, the souls of little children. Those who had managed the mill, and collected the beasts to work it, had been so much occupied with the machinery that they did not have the time to notice what it had been doing.

A silk ribbon or metal beads worn about the neck are a better protection against diphtheria than all the antitoxin in the world.—*The Character Builder*, June, 1913.

NOT A PROFESSION

In the testimony before a board of arbitration considering the pay and conditions of service of the street railway employes in Boston, the superintendent of the surface railway service declared that it takes five or six years for the average conductor to develop a satisfactory degree of efficiency. In a letter to the President of the Board of Education of New York City, former president Charles W. Eliot of Harvard ventured the opinion that a teaching career of five years was sufficient to compensate the state for the training received in the normal schools. No one would explain these apparently divergent views by claiming that the public service corporations held up too high a standard, whereas Dr. Eliot's standards are too low.

The key to the matter seems to lie in the nature of the question each was called upon to answer. The superintendent of the Boston trolley cars was trying to explain why the bulk of the men are paid such low wages. The retired educator was trying to justify the exclusion of the mother from the class-room. Both were making special pleas. The street-car man, however, has this advantage over the educator; he was dealing with facts, whereas the other was dealing with opinions and conclusions that were not necessarily based of facts. The fact is that the green conductor is not an efficient conductor; that the green teacher is not an efficient teacher. That some conductors and some teachers develop efficiency more rapidly than others must be obvious to all; and that some in each class never acquire a satisfactory degree of efficiency must be admitted while deplored. The one thing that is significant here is the fact that it takes time to develop proficiency and efficiency. If teaching is ever to be a profession it must first of all offer an opportunity for *maturing* in service.

The managers of industrial and commercial enterprises of all kinds are rapidly waking up to the fact that it does not *pay* to break in workers who

are not going to stay. The public, in the management of its schools is doing more than breaking in teachers—it is giving them several years of specialized, expensive training. In many States the normal school student is required to pledge service in the schools amounting to from two to five years. In most cases no attempt is made to hold the graduates to their share of the agreement. The theory of exacting the pledge seems to be that the State can in part at least compensate itself for the costly education by getting a quantity of underpaid service from the graduates. The theory of leaving graduates to teach or not to teach seems to be that even after the expensive education has been bestowed upon an individual, it is poor economy to make an unwilling teacher hold a class even at a low wage. But nowhere are school systems with their normal departments organized with a view to developing high grade professional service from the teachers.

There is supervision, good supervision in many places. There is a premium on continued study. There are special facilities for further study, for conferences, for other special assistance. But there is no attempt to encourage the teacher to make a life-work of her calling. The expectation seems everywhere to be that the teacher's career is to be cut off by marriage or by entrance into some business and those who stick to it long enough may hope to be promoted to supervisory or administrative positions. As long as this state of affairs continues there will be no teaching profession in this country.

Nine-tenths of the teachers are women. Most of them have taught less than five years—less than three years. That is to say, accepting the Boston street-car standard of relative efficiency, most of the teachers are barely ripe. If the majority of teachers are to be of a satisfactory degree of efficiency there

will need to be a great change in the composition of our teaching body. We shall either have to reduce the number of women in the schools until they represent but a small residue of *permanent* workers, or we shall have to make it possible for a woman to remain a teacher and at the same time satisfy her other needs as a member of society and as a human being.

The controversy about the return of the mother to the classroom has been clouded by several more or less irrelevant issues. From the point of view of society as a whole it is eminently desirable that the mother give her children a certain amount of personal care, however inefficient she may be as a nurse or teacher. So important is this that far-seeing employers have found it profitable to pay mothers for staying at home with their infants instead of having them come to work. Where the mother is driven by economic necessity to abandon the child to the vicarious solitudes of a day-nursery the community suffers. No person who understands the elements of the subject would maintain that mothers should return to their work "as soon as possible." But this is not the same as saying that they should not return at all.

In the first place there are the mothers who *must* work to maintain themselves and their children—and this is true absolutely without prejudice to the fathers of the children. Those who think that the wage-labor of mothers is in itself iniquitous should agitate for state subsidies for necessitous mothers and indigent children, or for a minimum family-wage for every male wage-worker. From the point of view of the children, there must be maintenance as well as the mother's care.

In the second place, we must accept the fact that women *do* work, and it is socially important that their work be as efficient as possible. If high statesmanship require the exclusion of mothers from wage-earning, let us settle that issue first. If it does not, then the exclusion of mothers from the classroom must be justified on other grounds. The

best argument so far offered for this exclusion is that the interruptions necessitated by motherhood tend to reduce the quality of the work. This, however, is a mere conclusion; it may be true—and then again, it may not. Debaters could offer good arguments on both sides; we need to know the facts. Our own opinion is that a woman who is really interested in children and in education is worth more professionally after a series of interruptions to bear and rear infants, than one who has been continuously in the classroom because she had no opportunity to give up teaching. Moreover, in the life of every normal family there comes a time when the youngest child needs the mother but a small portion of the day. And it is at this very time that the mother's work—whatever it may be—is likely to show its highest efficiency. To make it illegal for mothers to give of their experience and insight to society would be suicidal folly. To permit mothers to live and feel and think without doing useful service would be well-nigh murderous. To allow them to serve, but to exclude their service from the schools would be the extreme of pedantic stupidity.

Society needs the services of all who are able and surely teachers who become mothers still have ability that the schools need. The individual needs an opportunity to serve, and surely for many the best service can be given in the school—mother or no mother. The establishment of high standards of service and efficiency is possible only where the opportunity for work is not cut short by arbitrary rules, however it may be interrupted. If we are to have a body of professional teachers we must make it possible for women as well as men to look upon the vocation of teaching as a life work.

Unless the thinking forces of this country are turned from the subordinated ideals of the past to the vital ones of the present, hunger and economic servitude will cause the masses to change evolution into revolution as they have done before, when those who should have been their leaders became their masters.—CHARELS DE GARMO, in Herbart and the Herbartians.

CREDIMUS V

We believe that unless some tangible and important function in educational management and control is granted to teachers, it will be useless to expect much improvement in education from within, and useless to expect much improvement in the professional and social spirit of teachers—From "Credimus" in December (1912) number.

If you were trying to improve the breed of a band of hunting horses, a bar added now and then to the height of your fence would afford a convenient test of the vaulting ability of the animals. Being the owner of the horses you would not hesitate to add a bar whenever you thought the market or your own pride in the product required it.

If you were the boss of an educational system, you might feel a similar need or pride in "raising the standard". In fact, you would be obliged to raise the standard, or fail to have your name appear in the "herdbook" of your country's educational aristocracy.

Now, bars are good things in their places, but one limitation to success in applying them rigidly in the rearing of horses or teachers, is that as you produce excellence in jumping bars, you are liable to overlook the possible existence of some other useful qualities, or breed them out altogether. If you are breeding horses, you may not care; if you are producing teachers, you may not care either. If you have been a teacher yourself, one reason you would not care is because caring for other things (which means having other ideals) is one of the qualities that have been bred out of you.

Whether you like this or not, is it not true that the constant insistence upon raising the scholarship standard of admission to the teaching profession and for promotion has produced a body of teachers who have improved notably in that one qualification? Indeed, their general excellence in scholarship tends to make their human, social and even their intellectual qualifications appear quite insignificant.

The system that has produced this one-sided development does not appear to have the internal power to stop even long enough to take account of its product. True, there are many leaders in the higher reaches of education who "lecture" teachers on what they should do, and the teachers find their talks so inspiring. But the lectures do not solve the problems. Undeveloped human beings still teach our youth, and there is little "improvement in education from within."

Evidently, what we need for the purpose of developing young human beings is fully developed older human beings, men and women who have outgrown their childish pride in the A's they received at college, strong persons of poise, balance and independence, who have thrown off the yoke of educational feudalism and all its trivial signs of bondage to a foolish ideal, and have stood forth as men and women.

We cannot get such people by the lecture method; they grow from practicing on life. The natural life for a teacher to practise on is the complex of affairs of his own profession. To those professional and non-professional managers of education who have not made satisfactory progress by themselves, we say: Let the hitherto restrained and natural desire in teachers to do manifest itself in coöperating with you in the control of educational forces. Then we shall see the natural response of strength and breadth that comes from dealing with large affairs.

Those qualities which teachers find useful in improving education from within, will give them just that impetus for the development of professional and social spirit which they have always needed.

"Why do teachers always have to be so sarcastic?" said a school girl recently when she thought there were no teachers about. Let us go into the department room and think it over.

STANDARDS FOR MEMBERS OF EDUCATIONAL BOARDS

The Bureau of Municipal Research of New York City in its recent circular, "No Matter Who is Elected—No. 18" says, "Nothing could do more to keep education out of politics than to have those who appoint voluntary educational trustees from 1914—1917 pledge themselves to be specific in their standards, and to refuse to appoint or to reappoint men or women to the Board of Education, local school boards, City College, etc., who," (see below).

These standards as proposed by the Bureau ought to be very serviceable, but we beg the future Mayor and the Borough presidents to give heed also to some others which we propose.

Proposed by the Bureau of Municipal Research

1. Who in intelligence or strength of character are inferior to teachers and principals.
2. Who believe that the public can never understand school questions.
3. Who are not in the habit of basing judgment upon facts.
4. Who do not know reasonably well the local conditions which the city's educational work is supposed to express and to meet.
5. Who are incapable or disinclined to use and to improve the official records which tell more than their own eyes or ears can see and hear.

Additional Qualifications Proposed by The American Teacher

1. Who in their understanding of the purpose of education are inferior to teachers and principals.
2. Who believe that the teachers can never understand public questions.
3. Who are in the habit of ignoring facts altogether.
4. Who do not know reasonably well the local conditions which interfere with the city's educational work, and what interests are responsible for them, and why.
5. Who are incapable of using or not inclined to use their own experience, as well as indifferent to the use teachers and principals and superintendents make of the records of their eyes and ears and minds.

(Continued from page 136)

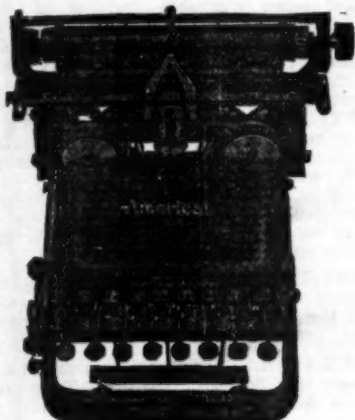
It may be argued, and in fact it is argued by the committee, that this plan is "merely a temporary expedient to relieve intolerable conditions * * * and it is in no way intended to minimize the necessity of constructing new buildings." If that is the case, it is a very poor expedient, and one that does not solve the part-time problem at all. The extra time allowed for the school day does not compensate for the objectionable features inherent in the very structure of the plan. In fact, the plan that has been in most common use for a long time (designated by the committee as "First System") has many more commendable features than the one proposed.

This being the case, we think that the only solution to the part-time evil is to have no part time. This may be accomplished by the construction of a sufficient number of school buildings to meet not only present demands, but also those of the future. In the meantime, let a plan be evolved which will meet the serious problem presented without creating new evils infinitely worse than those we wish to remedy. The teaching corps of the city should be called upon to make suggestions for this purpose. That the teachers have not been consulted is a good indication that Democracy in Education is still a matter for the future.

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—LAURA DRAKE GILL, President College for Women, Sewanee, Tenn., in *The American Magazine*, June, 1913.

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